

# Welcome To Santa Margarita County Preserve

The 173-acre Santa Margarita County Preserve is part of the County of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program. The property was acquired to preserve the resources and picturesque scenery of the Santa Margarita Valley, while providing additional public trails in the community of Fallbrook. In partnership with the Trail Councils of the Fallbrook Land Conservancy, the park was restored for public access after the 2002 Gavilan Fire.

The preserve consists of riparian and upland habitats. The lush river corridor provides wildlife a place to forage and make their homes. Raptors are a common sight overhead, and deer and other large mammals rely on the river for their water.

The trails are open for horseback riding, hiking, and mountain biking. To the north, the trails connect with the Fallbrook Public Utility District's trails. To the west, the preserve is buffered by Camp Pendleton.

The area has a rich cultural history. For centuries the abundant resources in the river valley sustained Native Americans, named Luisenos by the Spanish explorers. During the Mexican era, Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores was granted to brothers Pio and Andres Pico in 1841. Today, Camp Pendleton encompasses the original rancho boundaries. The Santa Margarita watershed includes portions of Riverside and San Diego County, linking the communities of Temecula, Murrieta, Fallbrook, De Luz, Camp Pendleton, and Oceanside.

The park is open seven days a week from 9:30 a.m. to half an hour before sunset. For public safety and protection of the resources, the preserve will not open in the event of heavy rain. Fishing in the river is not permitted at this time.

## Rules and Regulations

- Accidents:** The County of San Diego shall not be responsible for loss or accidents.
- Unauthorized Motor Vehicles:** The unauthorized operation of motor vehicles is prohibited.
- Littering:** Is prohibited.
- Defacement Prohibited:** No person shall remove, deface, or destroy trail markers, monuments, fences, trees, camp or picnic structures, or other preserve facilities.
- Preservation of trail features:** All wildlife, plant, and geologic features are protected and are not to be damaged or removed. All historical artifacts are to be left in place.
- No Hunting:** No person shall use, transport, carry, fire, or discharge any firearms, air guns, archery device, slingshot, fireworks, or explosive device of any kind in a preserve.
- Alcoholic Beverages:** Alcoholic beverages having more than 20 % alcohol by volume are not permitted.
- Fire hazards and smoking:** No smoking. All open flames are prohibited.

## Reservations and Information

For online reservation information, visit us at [www.sdparks.org](http://www.sdparks.org)

Toll Free: 877-565-3600

Local: 858-565-3600

